

Law Student Opportunities

Criminal Law Division

Correctional Writs and Appeals Section

San Diego



The Correctional Writs and Appeals section (CWA) of the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's Office represents the State of California in all levels of state and federal court when prisoners or parolees file petitions for writs of habeas corpus challenging the conditions of their confinement or the lengths of their conviction. CWA practice is based in constitutional law, and mainly consists of responding to petitions by prisoners sentenced to life with the possibility of parole who were denied parole. This section also responds to issues including a prisoner's challenge to a finding that he was guilty of a disciplinary violation in prison, or a parolee's challenge to the constitutionality of his conditions of parole. In doing so, CWA defends the actions of prison staff, parole agents, the Board of Parole Hearings, and the Governor.

The Student Intern Program allows law students to develop their written and oral advocacy skills by conducting legal research, writing briefs for submission to courts, and assisting attorneys in preparations for oral arguments or evidentiary hearings. Students who are certified through the State Bar may also conduct oral arguments in the state Court of Appeal. Students also have the opportunity to attend oral argument, visit Donovan State Prison, observe state and federal court proceedings, and participate in in-house training presentations.

Students are expected to work during the Fall and Spring semesters for approximately 20 hours per week, and during the Summer for at least 32 hours per week. The positions are generally unpaid although students may receive school credit. Successful applicants are generally second and third year law students who have demonstrated success in legal writing and oral advocacy, completed courses in Evidence and Criminal Law, and are eligible to be certified by the State Bar through the Practical Training for Law Students program.

How to Apply:

Please submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and an unofficial transcript (email, if possible) to:

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